

**ADA TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING
MINUTES
OCTOBER 22, 2007**

Meeting was called to order by Supervisor Haga at 7:30 p.m. Members present: Supervisor Haga, Clerk Ensing Millhuff, Trustees: Proos, and Westra. Also present: Planning Director Ferro, Deputy Clerk Thompson, and 13 community members. Absent: Treasurer Pratt and Trustee Sytsma. Trustee Damstra arrived at 7:32 pm

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Added to the agenda under Reports/Communications: Item 8, Correspondence from Ripley-10/17/07, Item 9, Correspondence from Holt-10/22/07, Item 10, Trails Update Report-10/22/07, Item 11, Correspondence from Carpenter-10/10/07.

Moved by Westra, supported by Proos, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried.

GENERAL TOWNSHIP BUSINESS

CONSENT AGENDA:

Approval of Minutes

October 9, 2007, Regular Board Meeting

Receive and File Various Reports/Communications

1. Ada Historical Society Newsletter - 10/07; 2. Building Permit Trends - 10/9/07; 3. Comcast - Lineup Change - 10/5/07; 4. GXMC - Transportation Division Minutes - 8/15/07; 5. MTA Legislative Update Fax - 10/5/07 & 10/12/07; 6. Open Space Advisory Board Minutes - 9/13/07; 7. Second Quarter 2007/2008 Budget Report.

Moved by Proos, supported by Westra, to approve items on the Consent Agenda. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF WARRANTS AND RECEIPTS

Clerk Millhuff presented Warrants and Receipts in the following amounts: Hand Checks: #101 \$1,661.17; #205 \$1,433.25; #208 \$439.93; #211 \$66,589.56; #590 \$39.92; #591 \$550.82; #592 \$1.63. Total Hand Checks \$70,716.28. Warrants: #101 \$11,254.42; #205 \$3,928.75; #208 \$5,806.12; #211 \$36,249.42; #590 \$14,689.89; #591 \$12,386.53; #592 \$1,974.99. Total Warrants \$86,290.12. Total Checks and Warrants \$157,006.40.

Moved by Westra, supported by Damstra, to approve the Warrant Report of October 22, 2007, in the amount of \$157,006.40. Roll Call: Damstra, Proos, Westra, Millhuff, and Haga Yes: 5. No: 0. Absent: 2. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Nevin Zolenski, 6151 3 Mile, asked the Public Works Committee to consider easement rights on parts of the bike trail in an effort to preserve the character of Knapp, Pettis and Honey Creek roads.

BOARD COMMENT

Trustee Westra followed up on his request from the last board meeting to invite a representative from Comcast. Supervisor Haga stated he has not been able to contact anyone, but it was on his list to do.

Clerk Millhuff stated Saturday, October 27, 2007 is the Fall Clean Up day located at the Kent County Road Commission at the end of Fase Street from 8:00 am to 2:30 pm. Roselle Park Open House will be held on Sunday, October 28, 2007 from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm. There will be live music, tours of the park and refreshments. A free hayride for Ada residents will take place from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm at Roselle Park on Saturday, October 27, 2007.

Supervisor Haga stated assessor, Ginger Soles, turned in her resignation effective November 2, 2007; adding ads are being placed in the Grand Rapids Press and trade newsletter for the position to be filled. Haga stated the dedication for the Rob Woodrick overlook was held Saturday, October 20, 2007 and there were eighty (80) plus people there with comments all positive. One hayride took place, Saturday, October 20, 2007 from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm which had 24 participants.

Supervisor Haga stated he has been in discussion with the Kent County Road Commission, Forest Hills Schools and the Sheriff's Department regarding a crossing guard at Alta Dale and Clements Mill. Adding he received calls from Kevin Green asking if the township was still interested in purchasing the property where he proposed to place a billboard. The board was asked if it wanted to go into closed session to discuss Mr. Green's offer. No action was taken.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business.

NEW BUSINESS

1000' OF 3 MILE/PETTIS PAVING

Planning Director Ferro presented the report on behalf of the Public Works Committee. The committee reviewed the proposed construction plans and met with the Kent County Road Commission. On October 2, the committee recommended, by a 4-3 vote, to pursue completion of the project by next year. The Public Works Committee stated the road commission would place a "*pavement ends*" sign at the intersection with Pettis Ave and 3 mile road which would discourage people to use it as a through route. **Moved by Trustee Westra to pave the section of 3 mile road, seconded by Clerk Millhuff to approve the recommended paving of the 3 Mile hill approximately 1000' of 3 Mile/Pettis.** A letter from Karen Holt of 5701 3 Mile Rd. stating her opposition to paving the road was accepted and placed on file in the Clerks office.

Open to public comment

Nevin Zolenski, 6151 3 Mile Rd. discussed issues of road safety and the new development interest to pave. Stating as a long term resident he does not agree the road is unsafe. Asking the township board to protect the history, natural beauty and safety of 3-Mile road by voting against the proposed paving.

Chris Barlow, a member of the special committee to research paving 3-Mile, stated he found some safety concerns and did not believe the road is a natural beauty road. He asserted the affected area is minor and 95% of the road will stay the same with 3 to 6 trees removed. Stormwater runoff is a DEQ concern and the road has a tremendous amount of traffic due to Forest Hills Eastern School and new building of homes.

Peter Holtz, lived and grew up there until 1995, stated paving the road would increase traffic and reduce safety. The gravel road is what gives the area a country feel and brings people to the area.

Pam Toigo, 5814 Cannon Hills, Cannon Township stated she is the mother of three small children and the safety concern is on Pettis. Stating when she drives through Ada Township the washout at the end of the hill makes the drive dangerous. Adding a washout seems to occur whenever there is a heavy rain or a large snow melt.

Karen Holt, 5701 3 Mile Rd, compiled a summary of points made at the committee meetings to discuss 3-Mile Rd. Stating the main concerns were safety, economics, maintenance, personal preference and convenience. Ms. Holt stated people jog, ride bikes and walk the road. Gravel encourages people to drive more carefully and paving the road would increase traffic and take away from its rural natural beauty.

John Toigo, 5814 Cannon Hills, Cannon Township restated his wife's concern with the washout of the roads after heavy rains.

Jennifer Marsh, 6169 3 Mile, was also on the committee and supports maintaining a gravel road. She stated many neighbors did not want the road paved and were concerned about loss of trees, traction, increased speed and traffic. Ms. Marsh stated the committee did not look at all the options available before voting to pave the road.

Anna Barlow, 3000 Mela Via CT, stated she agreed something had to be done with road. Ms. Barlow asked the board to consider safety being the primary issue and to put personal and financial interest aside.

Brent Kort, one of the purchasers in Mela Via CT is concerned about the road safety.

Open to board discussion.

Supervisor Haga stated there were no reports provided by the Kent County Road Commission to show any specific accidents reported on 3 Mile Rd.

Trustee Westra, who served on the Public Works Committee, stated there was due deliberation and consideration of all opinions that were offered. The Kent County Road Commission has a limited amount of funds to maintain roads, as a result of budget cuts. He looked at safety issues and there were no safety numbers available to the board regarding accidents. Accident statistics for these kinds of roads collected by the National Safety Association show that unmaintained gravel roads are more unsafe than paved roads. Westra stated the township could have a natural beauty road and a safe paved roadway. Westra urged the board to vote to approve the project.

Clerk Millhuff stated the minutes of March 2007 reflect she asked about statistics available on accidents and not having received accident reports there was no evidence to base the safety question on. Millhuff added 2 Mile Rd, Conservation, Cramton, Dursum, 4 Mile Rd, Dogwood and other township secondary roads had similar condition. Adding since asphalt is a non-porous material she was not convinced it would solve the current run-off problem and since asphalt is a non-porous material the possibility of more run-off and ecosystem problems may be created. Millhuff stated there are other valid ways to improve the roads. The Charrette proved the residents of Ada wanted the board to preserve and protect the quality of life. Adding, she has received several calls from 3-Mile Rd residents who have said they didn't want to see the paving done

Trustee Proos stated he recalled John Rice of the Kent County Road Commission informed him a collection system could be done. Adding Trustee Proos stated a greater safety concern on 3-Mile Rd are signs on hidden driveways and cars pulling out of these driveways to fast. He suggested looking into alternatives that would prevent the runoff, such as dolomite which is porous, allows water to run through it, and doesn't chip away. Trustee Proos stated until there is more research and answers from the professionals about dolomite and drains he could not support the paving recommendation.

Trustee Westra stated side drainage or rechanneling water flow down that particular stretch of road was addressed by the Kent County Road Commission. The Kent County Road Commission does not have a better way to deal with the run off other then to channel the run off as slowly as possible to the sides of the road and the base of Pettis Ave.

Trustee Damstra asked how many people lived on this section of 3 mile, and Supervisor Haga stated 3 residents, one at the base and two at the top.

Supervisor Haga stated the cost to pave the road in February, 2007 was \$125,000, which is 55% of our cost but it could have changed since then. Since Ada would be responsible for some of the funding for this project and there have been no reported accidents and residents do not seem to want it, the board needs to gather more data before deciding on this matter.

Clerk Millhuff stated the board is elected to represent the community and make decisions based on facts. At the March meeting she asked for an accident report and received nothing, Trustee Proos asked for information on drainage and alternatives materials and received nothing. Adding without all the facts she could not support the recommendation.

Trustee Damstra stated there are enough facts to move forward with this particular vote.

Supervisor Haga stated he has been dealing with the road commission and has a good working relationship working on this project. The Kent County Road Commission would raise the road up about a foot which would minimize carving into the hill and minimize the removal of trees. Haga stated he supported the project due to the traveling public on Pettis Ave. and the washout on Pettis. Even though there are no records of accidents he believes that drainage problems are a safety issue.

Moved by Westra, supported by Millhuff Yes: 2 No: 3 Absent: 2 Motion defeated.

GENERAL DISCUSSION REGARDING THE M-21 BILLBOARD PROPERTY

Trustee Proos requested Supervisor Haga call Mr. Green to suggest discussing the billboard property at the next board meeting.

Clerk Millhuff stated it should be put on the next meeting agenda. Her concern was it was not on the agenda posted on the township website and published in the press. There would be a lot of disappointed residents. Millhuff suggested in the meantime, the board look at the budget and what monies are available to purchase the

property and what “not to exceed” amount would be.

Supervisor Haga stated the amount was \$250,000 for the sign, \$67,000 for property, \$10,000 for legal expenses and \$5,000 for miscellaneous expenses which comes to \$332,000 to Kevin Green. Supervisor Haga stated he was uncomfortable with the numbers, and then stated fundraising as an option and to see what the public interest would be.

Trustee Proos added Supervisor Haga has the ability to negotiate for the township and to put down a good faith deposit through the open space and the administrative committee.

Planning Director Ferro stated purchase of land is to avoid the billboard and would be eligible for use of dedicated open space.

Planning Director Ferro stated a thirty (30) day wait would be too long for Mr. Green’s permit schedule. It’s important for the board to consider because once the billboard is there it would be an irrevocable permanent feature of the landscape of the township and a form of permanent blight on the community.

Trustee Damstra suggested the township ask the residents directly involved donate for the purchase of the property, have the people directly affected, donate to the township to purchase the area or with partial payment from it out of the Parks/Open Space Milage.

No Action Taken.

OPPORTUNITY FOR ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Karen Holt, 5701 3 Mile Rd., stated this was an exciting experience and democratic conversation. This decision will serve to help keep Ada beautiful and rural. She also thanked the board for considering the cost/need aspects of paving 3 Mile Rd.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**Deborah Ensing Millhuff, CMC
Ada Township Clerk**

RS/DT